ESSAY

ON THE

MILITARY SYSTEM

OF

BONAPARTE,

WITH

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND THE CORONATION OF HIS CORSICAN MAJESTY.

By C. H. S.

STAFF-OFFICER.

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INTRODUCTION.

When Revolutionary France had nothing to oppose to the Continental Powers but bodies of volunteers, without experienced Generals, without veteran Officers, her ruin was considered inevitable, and the division of her provinces was calculated in the cabinet before her fate had been decided by arms.

The contempt in which the raw French troops were held by the German veteran generals, was preparing for the former

unexpected successes, by proving to their enemies an abundant source of shame and disappointment. This fatal error was at length to cease, but the evil had already taken place.

Levies in mass, requisitions of every description, were regulated in the new Republic; the art of war was there considerably improved; the organization of her armies was cast in an immense and uniform mould; a greater number of light troops was employed. No march without guides, no actions without riflemen. A great reform took place with respect to the baggage and the heavy artillery. An amendment in the article of field pieces, which were rendered less unwieldy. Very few, or scarce any magazines of provisions. A general suppression of saddle horses

belonging to the subaltern officers of infantry; a rigorous obligation imposed on the generals to march at the head of their respective divisions. These in a few words are the essential changes which the French have made in their military system. Such is at this day that of Bonaparte.

Master of the destiny of deluded France, he saw himself at the head of an extraordinary armed force. The military institutions were conformable to the character of the Corsican general, allowing him to sacrifice, for the sake of victory, an immense and indefinite number of men. The French conscription may be considered as the fundamental basis of the Usurper's successes, and though he has prodigiously exhausted the population of his empire, no one will presume, in an-

swer to these continual demands, to alledge that the fields are deserted, that agriculture is deprived of its support. His CORSICAN MAJESTY is in the habit of promising his senate and people a solid and permanent peace at the termination of every campaign. The DISPENSER OF PEACE TO EUROPE has, during the last ten years, been continually renewing his promise. The Senate, assents to every thing, and the People endure every thing!

Hence it is that Bonaparte, having at his disposal an immense population; being at liberty to apply to his military expeditions all the resources of his EMPIRE; surrounded by experienced generals and officers, has been enabled to undertake his invasions in Germany,

without having recourse to any means but those of celerity and perfidy, because armies so numerous and so inured to war as his, marching through such a devoted country as the Palatinate or Bavaria, preclude the necessity of great talents in the commander, which besides were useless in a contest with such generals, as it has pleased their Majesties the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia to oppose to their new *brother.*

THE ESSAY which I offer to the public is particularly addressed to military men. If, in the course of it, I had only consulted the sentiments which inspire me with eternal hatred to the general enemy of mankind, I might have gratified them by indulging in violent de-

clamation. I have, on the contrary, confined my indignation within due bounds, in order to examine plain facts with the utmost impartiality. With this view, I lay before those brave men who are inclined to peruse my work, a faithful picture of the French armies, without concealing any of those advantages which I allow them over all those which they have encountered in Germany. I reduce those advantages to two principal ones—CELERITY and HARMONY in their operations. The successes of Bonaparte are chiefly to be ascribed to the simple and uniform organization of his armies. The military man, who is a judicious observer of the marches and battles in which he has been engaged, will judge from my work, whether, in

all cases, considering the RAPID MOVEMENTS of an army, and the UNIFORMITY OF THOSE MOVEMENTS, as the fundamental basis of its success, there exists in Europe a military organization better suited to the application of these two principles than that of the French armies; but it is a machine the model of which we have had before our eyes during a long series of years, and but few are requisite in any nation for the introduction of this change in its military system.

The war in Spain will regenerate the armies of Spain; and if the respectable assembly of the CORTES, which, through the vigorous and able defence of Lord Wellington, is allowed to deliberate with efficacy and tranquillity amidst the tur-

bulence of war, succeed in raising a large regular army, we trust, that notwithstanding the implacable hatred in which the satellites of the Emperor are so justly held, the military plan produced by the wars of the French Revolution will be deemed suitable to the noble insurrection in Spain, and consequently adopted.

Such has been my hope in publishing the present work. It might have been more copious, but what is left unsaid may be supplied by professional men. They will excuse its brevity, and forgive me for having spared them the trouble of longer comments. I write more in the style of a soldier than a literary man, and shall be happy if I have been able to express myself with the qualities essential to

every publication, clearness and precision.

The staff officer who takes the trouble of reading this pamphlet, will perceive that his most important duties consist in remarking during the course of a campaign, the general movements ordered by the commander in chief, in enabling himself, either verbally or in writing, to give, every minute in the day, an account of the respective positions and the strength of every part of the army. He will know by sight and by name all the subaltern generals and superior officers, that he may never fail to be recognized, which might in certain cases prove a dangerous error. He will neglect no opportunity of drawing up a circumstantial account of every affair of the least importance, and intro-

ducing exactness and constant activity in his duty, will be to his country an important defender, to his general a salutary help—may expect his entire confidence, and lay claim to the most distinguished employments in the service.

ESSAY

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OF

BONAPARTE.

THE wars of the French Revolution have introduced considerable changes in the art of destruction, and this fatal science, combined with a perfidious policy, is become the most terrible instrument of the misfortunes of the European Continent.

The philosopher discovers the source of the gigantic progress of Bonaparte, in the weakness of princes and the corruption of nations; to this cause without doubt is the Tyrant indebted for a considerable

share of his triumphs; but he owes them principally to the exclusive possession of this military art, which an unprecedented war of twenty years, has brought to the highest perfection.

The long resistance which the French made to the allied powers, can never be forgotten; however, we may venture to remark, that they owed their preservation solely to the constant incapacity, either of the generals, or the foreign cabinets, who never at any time knew how to take advantage of their perplexity.

It is true the immense population of France contributed to repair great losses; but useless would have been the courage and devotedness of her defenders, if the school of so many defeats had not at length taught a new species of warfare. The Republic, betrayed by its generals and abandoned by a great number of its officers, seemed hastening to destruction, but the appearance was delusive.

A prospect of promotion was open to every individual of the army. The common soldier might rise to the rank of general, he wanted not inclination; the tardiness of the coalition afforded an oportunity for the display of his talents, and the Republic triumphed.

Bonaparte appeared, he found generals formed in the midst of the dangers of war, soldiers accustomed to privations of every description. He painted in glowing colours, the fine and fertile climate of Italy, and shewed them the facility and advantage of so brilliant a conquest. The harangue of the new general was so much the more welcome, as the army was at that time in the most miserable condition. This invitation to plunder was received with shouts of VIVE LA LIBERTÉ, VIVE BONAPARTE!

The Corsican general has never since changed the language which he held on that occasion. The love of plunder by degrees

usurped the place of love of the country; and has ever since been the only tie binding so many slaves to serve under the Eagles of the Tyrant.

Bonaparte however is surrounded by officers equally active and intelligent. Clearness and precision characterize his orders. The subaltern generals receive their instructions couched in terms not to be misunderstood. The army is in motion, it has one end to accomplish; all the divisions unite in its attainment and are actuated by the same impulse. Excellent guides, spies well paid, open to the French columns, the barrier of the Alps. They make a precipitate attack on the out-posts, and succeed. The army marches with rapidity, impatient to inhale the fine air of Italy, and to appropriate to itself its rich spoils: Traitors and fools, deceived by the false appearance which the system of liberty and equality assumed, assist the wily Corsican. The stupendous Alps are passed.

I will not dwell upon the bloody conflict which placed Italy in possession of the French. Bonaparte owed a greater part of his successes to the facility of receiving continual reinforcements from the interior of France, no less than to the easy propagation of his revolutionary principles.

These campaigns so renowned, were only the trial of a new military system, at that time far below the perfection, which, for the misery of human nature, it has since attained. Perfidious system! which was forging fetters for France in the midst of her victories, and at this moment threatens to swallow up all Europe.

The month of September 1805, is the fatal epoch of the formidable invasion of the modern Attila. It was in the course of these expeditions, as astonishing for their rapidity, as terrific in their result, that Bonaparte made the formidable application of a military plan, generated by the wars of the Revolution, and which he has had

the talent to adapt to his enterprising and destructive genius. This plan is entirely his own: no written document attests its existence, it is known only by its terrible effects. Let me endeavour to unfold it:—

Brave Spaniards! Valiant English! for you I venture to write. Almost the whole of Europe is kneeling at the feet of the idol! You! you alone oppose it!! A resistance so worthy of admiration shall not be in vain. A consciousness of the justice and sacredness of your cause, will support you in the midst of your misfortunes. Victory depends on the sublimity of your efforts; you will learn even by your reverses the dangerous secret of your enemy. You will triumph.—May you find in this feeble Essay some information worthy of your courage! This I scarcely dare hope for. But I shall at least have given an unequivocal proof of my devotedness to you, and of the admiration you command.

INVASIONS IN GERMANY.

I have already observed that Bonaparte was in possession of a new military plan. Let us, for a convincing proof, take a glance at his expeditions beyond the Rhine. What more novel, than to see armies terminate in a few weeks, and always with the greatest success, operations which formerly would have occupied years, if not ages: to see them beat in the field, troops accustomed to war, well disciplined and superior in numbers.

What more novel, than to see a hundred thousand men move, in an enemys country, with the same facility as formerly a regiment. The mind the least open to credulity must attribute the uninterrupted train of successes which attend the military operations of Bonaparte, to the employment of some means, equally extraordinary and uuknown.

What do the generals of the different powers oppose to this torrent of victories? Old prejudices, old rules; and brave armies, sure of conquest were they better commanded, are overwhelmed in an instant through the ignorance or obstinacy of their chiefs, far from arresting the evil, they accelerate it.—Interrogate these men full of pride; lay before their eyes the picture of their capital errors, load then with the bitterest reproaches. Vanity! Ignorance! we must submit to Fortune, say they! Nor is this all, the cowards, the wretches, they embrace to day the conqueror whom yesterday they abhorred!!—

Were the prodigious successes of Bonaparte to be attributed to Fortune alone, the shortest and best way would be to wait with resignation for the favours of the goddess. This error has hitherto made more progress than is imagined, and men finding no other cause to which they may

impute the evil, by that excuse themselves from seeking a remedy.—Ye powers of the earth, ye generals of every country! Bonaparte will conquer you, he will annihilate you, if you do not succeed in introducing harmony, I do not say in your political combinations, but in the operations of your armies. Give them one SINGLE CENTRE OF MOTION, inspire them with the INCREDIBLE CELERITY of the French troops!!! That is the grand secret, the incontestable cause of the evil which overwhelms you.

The campaign of 1805 is unprecedented: it served as a model to subsequent expeditions. To describe the first of the invasions of Bonaparte in Germany, is to describe them all.—The same means employed in the rapidity of the marches and the harmony of their movements. The same principles applied in the affairs of Austerlitz, Jena, Ratisbon and Wagram.

CAMPAIGN OF 1805.

In the month of September, two hundred thousand French, commanded by Bonaparte in person, cross the Rhine; marching at the same moment from several different points. The Hanoverian army, under the command of Bérnadotte, the Gallo Batavian troops, conducted by general Marmont, put themselves in motion at the same time, and respectively command the movement to be made towards the general rendezvous. The immense tract from the Lake of Constance to the Maine is invaded by numerous columns. They march with impetuosity, but in concert. All are directed to the same object. Mack cannot divine it. It is a secret which Bonaparte has entrusted to Berthier alone.

Maps laid down with exactness during the quiet of peace are in all the staffs.

Every thing is foreseen, every thing calculated to accelerate and cover the marches. The enemy surprised at all points, retires in dismay. Fear adds speed to the Austrian army. But the French army has wings. Powder and ball its only provisions, cannon its only baggage!!!

All the generals on horseback at the head of their legions. The captains of infantry on foot at the head of their companies. Every officer acting as an example to his soldier in the support of fatigues and privations.

The march of the columns is never retarded by the trouble of transporting provisions. Castles, Abbeys, Farms, the house of the citizen, the humble cottage, are the magazines of a French army. Its daily encampments are adapted both for the safety of the troops and the facility of procuring subsistence. They halt to take some hours rest. The present supplies are not exhausted, but they will

do to-morrow as they have done to day, and thus in a few days arrive on the banks of the Danube. The rapidity of the marches prevent the lighters following. They remain at some distance behind; how is the army to pass? Detachments of Voltigeurs having preceded by some hours the chief columns, closely follow the enemy sword in hand: the bridges are preserved; and the troops pass the river.

However Mack has no conception of the march of the French. He throws himself under the batteries of Ulm, resolved and perhaps persuaded that he shall be able successfully to break a line which appears to him too much extended. Idiot! not to perceive that this line, at first immense, is insensibly closing, that the columns are concentrating, and that they are on the point of enclosing him in the cage which he himself has chosen!

In vain had Bonaparte calculated with

exactness the march of the different corps of his army; in vain had the Austrian general thrown himself into the snare which was laid for him, one incident might have ruined all, Bonaparte might have lost his prey.

To invest Ulm it was necesary to concentrate. Numerous columns filing on the same road, arrive at the same point. A hundred thousand men, fatigued by long marches, destitute of provisions, occupy by continuing their march a position which becomes by degrees less spacious. From that they cannot retire, or all is lost. A most critical moment! the supplies from the countries occupied by this immense body are hourly consumed.

To compleat their difficulties, the rain falls in torrents. A heavy uninterrupted rain for several days deluges the country. The brooks and rivers overflow. The roads are horrible, and in some places quite broken up. The army marches

through mud and passes the night in water, it is on the point of perishing with distress and hunger, the troops discouraged begin to murmur. What is to be done? A proclamation is read at the head of the columns. The army is praised, flattered, carressed, and its constancy applauded in the highest terms. It is informed that the enemy is on the point of being surrounded; a few minutes perseverance and it will reap the fruits of so many fatigues and privations. The troops are pacified and continue their march.

However bread is wanting the army perishing for want of provsions! but the commander in chief prevents the calamity. Already are active and vigilant officers dispatched into the surrounding country. They obtain by threats what is rarely refused to friendly solicitations. The noblemen and Burgomaster answer at the risk of their lives and fortune for

the good will of the inhabitants. All must yield to the force of those demands. Twenty four hours suffice to obtain a supply of bread. The inhabitant offers his vehicles, and horses, which he accompanies himself, to forward with greater rapidity the provisions wherever they may be required.

The army receives supplies from all quarters. Its primary wants being satisfied, nothing can afterwards stop it. The light artillery is absolutely necessary and must follow in spite of the rain which is incessant: if horses sink under the fatigue, soldiers supply their place. The enemy makes a shew of defending the approaches of Ulm, but is overthrown. The French army is desirous to conquer, but it above all wishes to put an end to its privations. The capture of Ulm will give it a new existence. The heights which command the place must be carried, they were lined with troops and artillery. Orders are

given for attacking these, the French rush on with impetuosity. A destructive fire of artillery is kept up in the midst of a pelting rain. In less than two hours, the Austrians are dislodged, and throw themselves into the city; three hundred French enter with them pell mell. Ulm is invested, closely blockaded. Ulm capitulates, and the French army reaps the fruits of its constancy and incredible celerity.

The success of the campaign was now decided, upwards of sixty thousand men taken, destroyed or dispersed. The conquerors required a moment's repose. The rich and spacious city of Augsbourg furnished them with abundant means. It was not enough that they found bread, wine was also procured. The fatiguing marches, the privations, the rain, all is forgotten.

Nil actum credens, cum quid superesets agendum.

LUCAN.

While there remains any thing to do, nothing is done: this is the idea of Bonaparte. Vienna must be taken, the Russians must be conquered. Orders are issued for departing; the columns put themselves in motion, cheerfully quit their encampments, and march on, animated with fresh ardour. Strong vanguards precede them, at the very heels of the remnant of the Austrian army. The road into Bavaria lies open: it resembles a military promenade. The expenses of the French army are paid by the inhabitants. The superb and rich city of Munich is transformed into an immense inn. The Prince Max himself attends on the soldiers of Bonaparte, and his *good* people defray the expenses,

Thus far we see this grand army subsisting without magazines: it is still too

well provided to require them. They become every day more familiarized to that mode of subsistence; the soldier at least finds his advantage in it. A few hours rest at Augsbourg have made him forget former fatigues. His passage through Bavaria in the midst of security and plenty, has inspired him with fresh vigour. Disposed to undergo new hardships, he is particularly impatient to engage.

But an indefatigable vanguard prevents him the trouble. Bent on the pursuit of he enemy, it attacks him wherever he is to be found. Even the darkest night affords not a moment's repose to the Austrian army. The most impetuous attacks succeed each other with the greatest rapidity. The most advantageous positions, even rivers are no impediment to the progress of this vanguard. So much daring and activity distract the Austrian generals. The preservation of their baggage becomes the only object of their thoughts. No longer desirous to engage, they even de-

prive themselves of the means of fleeing in safety. In no instance do they endeavour to break up the roads. The French find bridges over every river, over every brook. The Iser, the Inn, the Selza, the Ems, &c. are feeble barriers. Bonaparte enters Vienna, the occupation of this immense and opulent city of the HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE, having cost his army but a few rapid marches and skirmishes of the vanguard.

It was not sufficient that the Austrian generals had hitherto displayed cowardice and ignorance; the French troops had not as yet received proofs of their stupidity. To that, Bonaparte owes the important preservation of the bridges of the Danube. This essential capture is the result of a conversation between a French officer and the Austrian general, who had been charged to defend or burn them. He did neither, and the French passed the river.

Such folly on one side, such activity on

the other, gave to the progress of the conqueror a rapidity till then unheard of. They were in Bavaria, they are now in Moravia.

At length this Russian army, so long expected, appears in sight of the French. Bonaparte halts, he encamps his troops. It was the latter end of November: soldiers, officers, generals, all sleep in the open air: he himself the same.

If his enemies act in concert, he is lost; all is over with him and his empire. In his front a hundred thousand men, eighty thousand of whom are Russians, the bravest soldiers in Europe. The Archduke Charles marching with hasty strides from Italy with a victorious army of more than fifty thousand Austrians, and in a few days a fatal junction will take place. If the Prussians stir, Bonaparte will be surrounded by four hundred thousand men: he has with him but eighty thousand, and is at the distance of two hundred leagues from his frontiers. .....Well, he not only escapes from such im-

minent danger, but even with victory! never was triumph more complete.

The Prussians are amused with gold, then was not the time to be frugal; never were millions better expended. From having the appearance to tremble before the Russians, they attack them with the greatest boldness on the second of December, and the bloody affair of Austerlitz teaches dismayed Europe, that Bonaparte possesses in a superior degree the arts of deceiving and conquering. The Russian army is cut to pieces, Austria is humbled. The Russian army, including twenty thousand Austrians, amounted to 106 thousand men. Bonaparte opposed to such an immense force but seventy thousand fighting men.

The event deserves explanation.

BATTLE OF AUSTERLITZ.

Were it only necessary to detail the exploits of a Tyrant whom I abhor, a sentiment of horror would oblige me to drop my pen. In describing his successes, my only aim is to reveal the causes of them, to lay open the secret to those brave men who resist him; happy shall I be if in a short time they may be enabled to make use of the same means, and fight him with his own weapons! It must not therefore be expected that I should enter into those useless details, with which so many vile sycophants swell the vanity of the Corsican, whom notwithstanding his multiplied victories history cannot honour with the name of Great. I will point out with precision the precautions he took to secure himself the victory, the causes which determined it, and my end will be answered.

It is sufficient to cast a glance at the po-

sition of Bonaparte in order to be struck with the dangers which surrounded him. He conceives the whole extent of them himself. He had but two measures to pursue, either to retreat over the Danube, or to fight without delay. He hesitated not; the latter was determined on; and not a word mentioned of retreating. His first care was to represent to his army, that it was absolutely necessary it should conquer, a salutary measure, but a measure seldom resorted to by other generals, though it produces great effects.

The French army easily comprehended him; every individual prepared himself for action and to do his best. Nothing escapes the penetration of a Tyrant so skilful, with dexterity he finds out the secret of obtaining a fête from his army.

On the night of the first of December, which was the eve of the grand day, all his troops at the same instant kindle fires; each soldier bears a lighted torch at the point

of his bayonet, and celebrates, by this new mode of illumination, the anniversary of his own shame and the coronation of the Corsican Emperor. Loud and long continued shouts are heard throughout the whole line, the monster grins with delight, the Russian shudders with fear.

However he visits the several watches; addresses himself to the soldiers: even tygers can caress. This is an art of which Bonaparte is master. He begs for victory: his troops promise it; they will keep their word.

I have already mentioned that Bonaparte pretended alarm at the appearance of the Russians. He had his reasons. If the French army made a retrograde motion, it was for the purpose of appropriating to itself an important position, and of selecting one for the enemy. Alexander was too sure of victory to remain quiet. He makes no hesitation in following an army which he considered as already half beaten, and

pitches his camp on a spot which Bonaparte had time to examine and appreciate. This was what the Corsican general wished. There Alexander must stop.

The rejoicings of the French army in honour of their Commander soon ceased, the torches were extinguished, and the soldiers return to their bivouacs for repose. Bonaparte allowed himself none. The whole night was spent in reconnoitering the enemies camp, and making the last dispositions. Piquets of light horse, favoured by the feeble light of the moon, advanced as near as possible to the front of the Russian army. Intelligent officers and experienced in this service, are at the head of these small detachments, nothing escapes their penetration and the activity of their researches. They derive respecting the position of the enemy the most useful information. It may be concluded that the spies did not slumber. Their reports confirmed those of the officers; besides, Bonaparte desirous to

have certain proof of the accuracy of the different reports, is the whole night in motion, accompanied by his most experienced generals. Nothing is wanting to the necessary information: and the Russians are not allowed time to quit a position so well reconnoitered. What activity! what vigilance!

Let us now judge of the nature of the dispositions made by Bonaparte, were they not regulated by the most secure and important data. They had been begun during the day of the first of December; in the night of the same day they were improved and compleated.

Bonaparte draws his line of battle, at the distance of near two miles from the bivouacs of the French army. The positions to be occupied by the several columns of the army, are marcked out with precision even on the very spot. The Field Marshals being present receive the most explicit and particular instructions.

Being well conceived, they will be well executed.

The whole of these measures together, in the highest degree tended to insure success. A particular precaution however remained to be taken. The French army was considerably inferior in number to that of the enemy. The order of the day prevented that disparity from being remarked, by rendering it almost imperceptible.

It is a custom universally tolerated on a day of battle, that a soldier when dangerously wounded should receive immediate assistance from his companions. Fear easily assumes the cloak of humanity. Is a soldier wounded in the leg or thigh for instance, two others who have received on injury, under pretence of conveying him to the nearest field hospital, leave their ranks and seldom return but to shout victory. Thus in the event of one man being wounded, three are disabled from engaging.

If this is a favourable pretence for cowards, it is pernicious to an army. In an engagement of a few hours, it is considerably weakened. The following order was therefore circulated through the lines.

"That no person should leave the ranks, under pretence of carrying off the wounded."

This order was punctually executed, the wounded fell without complaining. The attention of their companions was not taken off for an instant by their moans, and this new measure afforded a considerable relief to the French army.

Then was the time to avail himself of the grand manœuvres of the camp of Boulogne. Bonaparte relied on them, he was not deceived.

In order to execute them with precision, presence of mind is requisite, and besides that, silence is necessary. The cry of FORWARD which the soldier imagines operates as a stimulus to his courage in

action was therefore prohibited. During the whole battle nothing was heard in the French army but their pieces. If the firing is suspended for a moment, it is to take an advantageous position, a change of front takes place. A profound silence reigns, nothing is heard but the necessary voice of the commander.

Now it may be asked, how were the two Emperors of Russia and Austria employed, while their enemies were endeavouring by so many methods to insure themselves the victory? They placed an entire dependance on the finest, most numerous, and most valiant army that ever covered the plains of Austerlitz; and were slumbering in tranquillity, relying on the promises of their generals. They were to experience a terrible alarm; on the second of December before daybreak, the French army is in motion. The several columns march under the direction of the Field Marshals.

Each column is directed, in the greatest order towards the post which was the preceding evening pointed out. A fog covered the march. At eight, a light breeze springs up. The sun appears, and the French army is observed by the astonished Russians, drawn up in the finest order of battle.

Ninety battalions of infantry in two lines, on the right, and fronting the high road which leads from Brunn to Vischau, formed with it an acute angle of which a high hill, not far from the same road, may be considered as the vertex. This hill was defended by a strong battery of heavy ordnance, and a numerous detachment of regular infantry, which commanded the road, and blocked up the passage.

It protected the left wing of the French, under the orders of Lannes, which body was supported by all the heavy horse, consisting of eleven regiments of cuiras-

siers and two of carbineers, under the immediate command of Murat.

In the centre was Bernadotte at the head of the main body of the army, chiefly composed of infantry, with some squadrons of light horse.

The fourth body, under the command of Soult, formed the right wing and covered Brunn. Above one hundred pieces of cannon were interspersed through the whole extent of the front.

Bonaparte acting as Commander in Chief, accompanied by Berthier and his whole staff, placed himself behind the main body, at the head of the corps of reserve, composed of twenty battalions of chosen troops, three or four regiments of cavalry, including the guard, with twenty pieces of light artillery.

I shall say but a few words on the Russian order of battle. Though superior in number, their line did not extend beyond that

of the French army, the intervals of which were judiciously arranged.

The first shot is fired from the right wing of the French. It was the signal for battle. The Russians lost no time in returning it, and in an instant the fire becomes general. The two armies put themselves in motion, and march towards each other, accompanied by the awful and tremendous roar produced by three hundred pieces of cannon. The Russian artillery was immense and well served. The two armies have mutually diminished the distance which separated them. The rolling and destructive fire of the infantry begins through the whole line. From that moment the cannon pours in grape shot, and carries terror and death into the ranks. The whole atmosphere is in a blaze, the earth trembles. Add to this infernal harmony, the barbarous yells of eighty thousand Russians, which formed a more hor-

rible combination of sounds, than it is possible for the imagination to conceive.

This continued nearly three hours, before either of the two armies had gained any apparent advantage. The loss on both sides was considerable.

At length the horse guards of Alexander charge down upon the centre of the French army. The line gives way, one regiment of infantry is overthrown, and its eagle taken. This impetuous attack might have decided the battle in favour of the Russians, had it been supported. It is not, and that impetuous charge, instead of securing the victory, becomes the immediate cause of a general overthrow. Bonaparte soon makes his enemies sensible of the terrible effects of so great an error. He instantly takes advantage of it, and by that means decides the victory. He was not far distant, and every thing is already prepared to stop the disorder of his first line. Two squadrons of the chasseurs of his guard, supported by

two others of the grenadiers, under the command of Rapp, his Aid-de-Camp, rush sword in hand on the victorious Russian guards, who are in their turn penetrated by the impetuous shock of the French cavalry, favoured by the declivity of the ground. In vain do they endeavour to rally; Rapp allows them no time, they are cut to pieces with incredible speed. The artillery, standards, commanders, all carried off. Never was a charge made with more boldness or more success. The French infantry quickly recover from their momentary consternation. They attack the enemy *au pas de charge,* desirous to wipe out their disgrace. New battalions rapidly succeeding each other, fall upon the Russian infantry. At the same time all the French guards appear in the lines, and the artillery in its front begins to play. It occupies an elevated position, and its fire at once brisk and well directed, increases the disorder in the Russian ranks, firing over the heads of a

division of Bonaparte's corps of reserve, which is charging from the thundering platform.—The French guards impatient to engage, desire to fall upon the enemy; they solicit permission with loud cries, anxious to partake of the victory; such ardour was for that time unnecessary. Bonaparte silences his troops, and informs them that from that moment the success of the battle is decided.

The charge conducted by Rapp had carried disorder into the enemy's ranks. Bernadotte's infantry had skilfully taken advantage of it. The Russian line was broken in its turn, and the French general with equal celerity and precision, having changed his front, took the enemy's centre in flank, at the same time that it was attacked in front by a division of the reserve, and cannonaded by the artillery of the guards. Thus the manœuvre of Marshal Bernadotte decided the victory. It disconcerted the Russian

generals. Their centre was totally routed. It was impossible to rally them. They fought in vain with desperate fury.

Their right wing was not more fortunate; the French cuirassiers had charged it with equal courage and address, and rapidly rode over the prostrate infantry.

It was not so with the left wing of the Russians. From the commencement of the battle to the moment when victory declared in favour of the French, Marshal Soult had not maintained his position, without the most vigourous efforts. He must infallibly have yielded, but for the fortunate diversion made by the main body. The decisive movement of Marshal Bernadotte took place about the middle of the day; for a long time after, the action on the left wing of the Russians had not slackened. The firing seemed to have become hotter. At length these brave men, attacked in front, and flank, yielded, but not ingloriously; the

artillery men were mowed down on their pieces. Unable any longer to resist the violence of the attacks, and the superiority of numbers, that left wing, so long formidable, abandoned the field which was strewed with dead bodies.—The massacre of the Russian army became from that moment so much the more extensive, as its disorder was general; so much the more horrible, as the conquerors were animated by a resistance without example. Night at length put an end to the horrors of that bloody day.

The loss of the Russians, though almost incredible, is not the less true. It amounted in killed, wounded, and prisoners to more than fifty thousand men, including some thousand Austrians; the baggage, the ammunition, a great number of standards and one hundred and twenty pieces of cannon fell into the hands of the conquerors. The French lost thirteen thousand men in all.

The Emperor Francis, terrified, with all speed concluded a peace with Bonaparte. The Treaty of Presburg was signed a few days after the battle of Austerlitz, and put a period to the continental war.

Thus terminated a campaign as memorable for its rapidity, as for its consequences. A description of it deserved an abler pen than mine. Besides, a hasty sketch cannot but be imperfect, and I am not blind to the defects of mine. However, I flatter myself that I have strictly adhered to truth, and if she has imposed on me the painful necessity of detailing, without circumlocution, the success of a Tyrant, I trust that my impartial reader will discover in all my expressions the desire which animates me to develope the causes.

It is well known that in a few days, the grand Prussian army was annihilated, and that monarchy, in appearance so

powerful, experienced in 1806 such a shock, that at this moment it is very doubtful, whether she will ever rise from a situation next to ruin. •

If it were necessary, in order to answer the end I have in view, to give fresh proofs of the superiority of the present military system of the French, I would endeavour to trace it in their last campaign in Austria. In demonstrating that Bonaparte made use of the same means in this expedition, as in the war with Prussia, and its first invasion in 1805, I should yield to the pleasure of applauding the bravery, and intrepidity of the Austrian troops; I should teach those who are unacquainted with it, that the victory of Aspres is due to them, and to them alone; that their general had no share in it. I should demonstrate that he was unworthy of commanding so many brave men, as well through incapacity and ignorance, as the baseness of his character. Among the

many and enormous faults which have promoted the destruction of the house of Austria, the inactivity of her General in Chief after the battle of Aspres, is as unexampled as it is inexcusable. But what could the heroes of that brilliant day expect of a man, who with gaiety of heart could give his niece into the arms of the Corsican, and represent at the altar, the Spoiler of his country? Was there ever witnessed such a prodigy of stupidity and infamy?

I forbear more serious reflections on the fatal campaign of 1809. I shall confine myself to the observation, that Bonaparte was only beaten at Aspres because he had entertained an erroneous judgment respecting the Austrian army, and had extended to it the sovereign contempt in which he held its Commander in Chief. He paid dearly for his error, and it had nearly proved his ruin. However, it taught him never in future to neglect the great precautions which for that time he

had neglected to take. Indeed, nothing was omitted to effect a second passage across the Danube, and Charles, securely sleeping under those laurels which he had unjustly appropriated to himself, was awfully roused.

The Austrian army acted in a manner worthy of itself, but the French army was enabled to manœuvre, and Charles was beaten.

If the expeditions of Bonaparte in Germany are similar as to their short duration and the magnitude of their consequences, it is doubtless a species of warfare which is very advantageous, and the principles on which it is conducted deserve to be understood.

I have already observed, that Bonaparte owed all his successes to an exclusive military plan; I have shewn that it does exist by the effects it produces.—The CELERITY of the French troops, the UNITY of their movements are the causes. But

how is such a celerity introduced into great armies, how are they acted upon by a single impulse? how is it extended through the whole course of a campaign? These are the facts which it is necessary to explain. This must be learnt.

THE CELERITY OF THE FRENCH TROOPS: ITS CAUSES.

I shall begin by observing, that Bonaparte never carried on in Germany any other than an offensive war, and the opportunity which his enemies have almost uniformly afforded him, of striking the first blow, has not been one of the least causes of his success.

To all the generals in the world, it will prove an advantage to begin the war, but the advantage will be incalculably great to him, who commencing with powerful and well organized armies, having given them from the first a great impelling force,

all the speculations of his active and enterprising genius tend to perpetuate its duration, increase its energy. Bonaparte always begins a war with these dispositions, the first successes will of course always be his.

I will not here enter into a detail of the preparations Bonaparte makes before he begins a campaign, or what previous method he takes to insure success. It is a fact known to every one, that the most accurate maps are distributed among his staff, that he has at his command a great number of traitors and spies. He possesses in an eminent degree the art of bribing a kingdom or a province, and the art is seldom neglected by the French generals when an opportunity offers. These methods are not honourable, but I should consider them sublime, if his enemies knew how to employ them.

The equipage of a French army consists in a fine train of field-pieces, a light and well furnished field hospital; the

heavy artillery follows at a distance; ammunition is not wanting. The musquets must be in the best condition, and when, after that, the soldier is furnished with two pairs of shoes and provisions for two days, he is, in the opinion of Bonaparte, abundantly provided.

If the regiments can fire and march well, the army is capable of any thing; a few veterans (I call those so who have served during one campaign) dispersed in the companies, in a few days initiate the raw recruits. The officers know their business and perform it well. The generals having had twenty years experience, know how to manœuvre when there is occasion, a thing which seldom happens but on days when a pitched battle takes place, and then the marshals execute no grand movements but under the eye of Bonaparte or Berthier.

A large French army, on taking the field, is divided into several corps of

twenty or twenty-five thousand men each, under the command of different marshals. Bonaparte acts as Commander in Chief. Berthier, as Major General, receives his orders, and communicates them to the different corps. This is all that can be known by the enemy respecting the dispositions of a French army; the rest is a secret which Bonaparte confides to his major general alone, and if the case require it, to his Marshals.

The army takes the field; it is divided into several columns, the business of the day is marked out for each of the marshals, independent of the general instructions they have received, and each corps of the army advances as if it were acting alone, without concerning itself whether it forms the right or left wing. Its aim is to accomplish the object assigned to it, which consists in occupying, after a few hours march, a position which may favour the execution of the general plan. Having reached the rendezvous, a brigade for instance, composed of

several divisions, the Commander in Chief, as Marshal, points out to each division the position it is required to occupy. If the weather should be rainy and nothing be apprehended from the enemy, it often happens in such cases that the troops are billeted, and the assessment is such, that each soldier, partaking of the provisions of the inhabitant, may have sufficient to satisfy his appetite. The resources have been calculated beforehand.

However inclement the weather, if the case require it, the troops lie in the open air, except the cavalry, unless when an attack by night is expected. A brigade is thus encamped by the side of a river, at the foot of a mountain, or the skirts of a wood, &c. a strong guard is on the watch; outposts are placed in every convenient spot. The centinels are numerous, the patroles on the look-out the whole night, and it seldom happens that the generals, in person, fail secretly to visit the camp.

A sufficient number of men are detached from each company. They go to the neighbouring farms and villages in quest of straw, boards, &c. in short every thing that is necessary to the preparation of the bivouac. Others are engaged in cutting wood, or felling trees. Fires are kindled throughout the army. Places of shelter are erected. If the time and place permit, the soldier will make of these temporary erections very convenient lodgings. They only require permission to act, every thing is immediately in motion. Some plant pickets, others lay floors, one attends to the boiling of the pot, waiting for the provisions, which are not far off.

If oxen are to be procured in the neighbourhood, a regular distribution is made of them; but at all events the soldier who is commissioned to go for provisions, never thinks of returning empty-handed. If beef is not to be obtained, he brings veal,

pork or mutton ; the poultry is terribly persecuted. Bread and vegetables are not forgotten. The German must be very cunning who is able to conceal his wine from their scrutiny, and the country must be very poor, if the soldier does not find for himself something more than his ration.

After eating heartily, he will sleep soundly, is up at day break, and continues his march contented and alert. Such a life has for the French soldier charms which assist him in supporting the most incredible fatigues, and the most arduous marches.

The countries through which it may be necessary to pass are not all equally fertile. Let it not however be imagined that a barren country in any degree impedes the rapidity of their progress. The army, instead of being impeded, rather proceeds with more rapidity. The soldier, desirous to leave behind him sands or heath, is anxious to cross them—the success of the ope-

rations is not less certain. The troops rush forward to the attack with more alacrity, as victory, by delivering them from misery and hunger, will be the means of transporting them into a country where resources abound. But it may be asked, how is the army to subsist in a country where absolutely nothing is to be procured? The soldier can with ease load himself with provisions for two and even four days, his small provision will last longer, if there be a necessity. Besides, an army that has so few incumbrances, can march a great distance in forty eight hours, and the enemy who imagines that thirty leagues in a barren or desolated country form an insurmountable barrier, is miserably surprised at finding himself attacked at all points by troops whom he considered far distant, and who, at their rate of proceeding, resemble devils rather than feeble men.

I have before mentioned the momen-

tary embarrassment of the French army, when it was investing Ulm, several columns concentrated, fell as it were upon each other, and a deluging rain added to the danger of starving. It would have been useless for this army to take the field with transports of provisions, could they have kept pace with it, marching as it did night and day, when the badness of the roads scarcely permitted the flying artillery to advance; would it have been prudent to halt? by so doing they would have run two risks to no purpose. Mack would have escaped, and the army would have been in danger of starving, while waiting for its convoys.

In this extremity, the sight only of a victualler would have made a soldier faint. His whole dependence is placed in his general. The commander of a body of troops knows how to become its purveyor, and the energetic means he

employs, are followed by the most rapid and salutary effects. The commissioners of the stores would act improperly in such cases, their power would be of no weight, while the army is on its march, they have nothing to do.

However, the enemy assembled in great force, will at length oblige the French army to halt. The columns approach, the troops seek a position, and the army encamps. This frequently takes place near some large city, the neighbourhood of which certainly affords immense resources. Provisions are at length distributed, and the powerful system of requisition extends to a great distance. The magazines are filled with all sorts of provisions. From that moment all is order and regularity. If it is foreseen that the army will remain a length of time, the inhabitant receives in money the value of the provisions he furnishes; by which means they never fail.

The military chest is not impoverished on that account; the contributions bring in supplies, which is an art the French possess in perfection. The army entirely freed from the care of providing for its subsistence thinks only of the means by which the campaign may be terminated, and it may be concluded that employment is not wanting. Marches, counter-marches, reconnoitering, skirmishing, false attacks, are sufficient to keep them constantly occupied, and it is a species of warfare of which Bonaparte is seldom sparing.

The army is in continual motion, till a favourable opportunity offers to come to a decisive battle.

I have thus endeavoured to give an adequate idea of the manner in which the French troops subsist in the course of a campaign; if I have succeeded, the secret of their incredible celerity is explained: I have in part answered my end. Let me now complete it.

OPERATIONS TAKEN COLLECTIVELY.

If the French armies astonish by the rapidity of their marches, the harmony which prevails in their operations, and the unity of their movements, deserve to be considered with equal attention.

It has been observed, that a large French army at the moment of its commencing a campaign is divided into several bodies. I have mentioned that Bonaparte acts as Commander in Chief, that his Major General receives his orders and transmits them to the Marshals. To facilitate the comprehension of what I have yet to say, I will add, that the Major General having with him one or more Adjutants General, forms, with the addition of a certain number of officers of all ranks, what is called the grand staff.

The grand staff is the sole centre of operations; during the whole campaign, it is in the suite of the Commander in Chief, to whom every circumstance is reported, from whom every order issues, and the situation it occupies is called the head quarters.

The staff of a division is composed of a certain number of officers known by the name of adjutants, whose number varies in proportion to the urgency of the case. These officers are under the immediate command of a general of division, acting as head of the general staff. This term corresponds to that of major general, whose duty is on a large scale, what the duty of chief of the general staff is on a small one.

Each corps is formed into several divisions, which have likewise their private staffs, organized in the same manner as the general staffs, whence they receive their orders.

From the moment an army takes the field, the chief of the general staff belonging to each of the corps keeps an exact journal of the operations under the immediate inspection of the Commander in Chief or Field Marshal. This journal is modelled after the manner of the private journals in the staffs of each division: it contains every thing that relates to the movements of the brigade, from the commencement of its march, to the time of its taking a position. It gives an account of the difficulties which they have had to surmount, of the advantages they have gained, the losses sustained, of all memorable exploits, &c. It details with brevity and precision the actual situation of the brigade, its encampment, the extent and nature of the ground it occupies, and the Commander in Chief rectifies, if there be a necessity, the work of his chief of the staff, and adds his own observations. An extract from this

journal compiled in the most clear and simple manner, is confided to an officer of the staff appointed to convey it to the head quarters. He goes thither with all possible diligence, having strict orders not to give his dispatches to any but the major general or Bonaparte himself.

Each of the brigades having dispatched, and perhaps at the same time, an officer to the grand staff, the different reports are there read, compared, and the officers dispatched are expected to answer all the questions put to them by the major general, relative to their respective corps.

By these means, the major general, is enabled to form an exact idea of the position of all the brigades. He posseses the most extensive information respecting their different operations, and may ascertain whether they tend to the execution of the general plan.

If through urgency of circumstances, a brigade has been obliged to abandon its

position, the error may be rectified by the dispositions of the following day. These dispositions are ordered immediately on the arrival of the different staff officers at the head quarters. They set off again with celerity, and each returns to his brigade furnished with the order for the next day. What was done to-day to maintain this comunication, and preserve harmony, will be repeated to-morrow, and will be repeated to the end of the campaign.

Independently of the report which is transmitted every twenty four hours to the head quarters, by the several brigades, they are rigorously required every three days to send thither by the same conveyance, a statement of the precise situation of each army, the number of men present who are fit for action, of those left behind for garrisons, for correspondence, or for the escorting of prisoners, of the sick, wounded, dead, stragglers, &c.

Bonaparte is very strict in demanding

the execution of this measure, for which the generals in chief are personally responsible. This precaution is of the utmost importance, because in expeditions conducted with such rapidity, an army however powerful and numerous, sensibly diminishes every day; and if the Commander in Chief does not very frequently make enquiry into the losses it sustains, he may fall into fatal errors by continuing a plan of operations with forces far inferior in number to what he apprehends he has at his disposal; he would neglect to procure necessary reinforcements.

As long as the several brigades are near each other, the means of communication are easy, and order will reign in their movements.

Now admitting that the combinations of the general plan oblige a detachment of the army to deviate for a certain time from the common centre, still its operations are connected with those of the grand army,

and the communications with the major general will continue; I explain.

From the moment a brigade is to take a particular direction, the field marshal who has the command of it, receives from the major general the most positive instructions, with orders to observe them with the utmost precision. The corps thus detached from the grand army is required to accomplish some important object; it may be, after a few days march, to occupy, at all events, some particular position. Whatever obstacles may present themselves, they must be surmounted at any rate. Bonaparte does not give the general, to whom the expedition may be entrusted, orders to attack merely, he orders him to conquer. The general makes his arrangements accordingly. The enemy appears.

It would be difficult to convey an idea of the means that, under such circumstances, are made use of against him. All the arts that human genius can invent, are com-

bined and tried with inconceivable boldness. The enemy must infallibly give way to such repeated efforts, and if his resistance be ever so vigorous, the French general will accomplish his views, though he should lose three fourths of his army in the attempt. Of what consequence is that? The grand object is accomplished, and the important occupation of a position purchased at such an expense, secures to the grand army the primary and most important advantage, of having an essential line of communication open in all its parts, harmony in its movements.

This detached body, after having obtained its new position, may be at a great distance from the common centre; but if it were thirty leagues, at least, still it would transmit dispatches every twenty-four hours to the major general as before. The interval is immense, but the brigades having acted in concert, none of the enemy's troops interpose. The officer most

frequently passes without the least difficulty. All the post houses of the country thus invaded are respected, and enjoy an entire protection. Safeguards protect the service, and the couriers meet with chaises and horses in all parts.

The separation of a brigade may be such that one officer is not sufficient. In such a case, instead of one, two; three, and even more are dispatched to the head quarters. Being sent off at different times, some may be on the road to the chief staff officer, when others are returning; the correspondence is always conducted with activity, and never meets with interruption.

In 1805, the second division of the grand French army was in Styria, and its head quarters in Moravia; nevertheless, orders were communicated three or four times a week; had there been a necessity, the correspondence might have been kept up every twenty four hours.

The army of Italy was more than two hundred leagues distant, and yet Bonaparte was informed of the battle of Caldiero, of the retreat of the Archduke Charles, as soon as the court of Vienna, if not before; officers dispatched by Massena were present at the battle of Austerlitz, and three days after, he received the news of the victory.

These are the methods by which Bonaparte establishes an essential connection between all the parts of a great army, and maintains it during the whole of a campaign, and it is not less to a cause so simple in appearance, and so powerful in its effects, than to the incredible celerity of the French troops, that this perpetual and overwhelming train of victories must be attributed.

My subject naturally leads me to speak of battles. My observations on this important subject will be found at the end of the work, in which I cannot observe

the order and method I could wish, as that would require much longer time, and delay its publication.

My only aim is to be useful to those brave men who are contending with the myrmidons of the Corsican Emperor. Happy shall I be, if they find in the simple, and unadorned effusion of my thoughts, a method by which, not their glory may be promoted, but their success.

PART II.

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

MILITARY SYSTEM

OF

BONAPARTE,

AND ON HIS PERSON IN PARTICULAR.

CONSIDERATIONS,

&c. &c. &c.

Having demonstrated that the advantage of the military system of Bonaparte depended chiefly on the extraordinary celerity of his troops, we are not only aware that it would be well if the same means were employed against him, but we never once doubted the possibility, or even the facility of doing better.

Every time the Corsican general has entered Germany, he has entered less as a

general than a madman. His troops found in their marches provisions in abundance; but the excesses they were observed to commit, deprived them of all means of retreating, if the German generals had known how to constrain them to it. One shudders at the aspect which countries lately flourishing exhibit, having been ravaged by these Vandals, and how should they not be urged to all these horrors? when plunder was to be the price of victory, and their generals hesitated not to set them the example?

It is without doubt a great advantage to support armies during a campaign without magazines; it is a means which the enemies of Bonaparte should strive to adopt; but they should act with more moderation and economy. They will find in the wise government of the people, resources which are beyond the calculation of a mind bent on destroying; they will find powerful aid in the irritation of the inhabitants whom

the hordes of the Tyrant have hitherto tortured with impunity.

All the reflections which it is in our power to make on the subject, naturally lead us to wish that, whatever Bonaparte's force may be, the vigorous principle of acting offensively, and resuming it, even after a check, may be adopted. Indeed against such a man, it is in my opinion always dangerous to act on the defensive. His boldness should be repaid by still greater audacity; and the grand principle of diversions be strictly observed.

If the Archduke Charles after experiencing a defeat at Ratisbon had, instead of seeking safety in Bohemia, and giving himself up, condemning himself to act on the defensive, had the courage to march a large portion of his army to the Tyrol; had the Archduke John taken the same course, instead of endeavouring to defend himself in the Venetian territory, and retiring into Hungaria, the war would have taken a

dangerous turn for the conquerors: The militia of the countries situated on the other side of the Danube, Moravia, Silesia, Bohemia, the insurrection in Hungaria, added to a body of thirty thousand regular troops, would have been sufficient for the defence of the river, and Bonaparte, having in his rear the united forces of the two Archdukes, would not have been able to cross it. A considerable time after Austria acknowledged herself conquered, and signed the contract of her disgrace, the Tyrolese alone were still in arms, still contending!!

And indisputably, if the Austrian armies had only made a stand at this chain of moutains, this national bulwark, they might, by sending strong detachments into Suabia, Bavaria and even as far as the Rhine, have created the most serious alarms in the mind of Bonaparte, either by the inevitable interception of his convoys, or by favouring the insurrections to which the people of Germany were very well disposed.

The Corsican general compelled to retreat, would have lost the fruits of his victory, and the militia before mentioned, crossing the Danube in great numbers, Bonaparte would have found himself placed between two armies, the most formidable of which having its centre in the Tyrol, could never have been forced to an engagement, and might have destroyed the French army by mere skirmishing.

I might, in addition to what has been already said, submit several reflections of the same nature, respecting the expeditions of Bonaparte into Germany, all which expeditions have succeeded, because his enemies, after the first repulse, have uniformly committed the same error, namely, that of falling back perpendicularly on their line of operations. Hence it follows, that it must be an unpardonable error to oppose the Tyrant on such principles. The only mode of defence is by attacking, and the principle of diversions must henceforth

be considered as the most effectual means of conquering. It cannot be too often repeated.

If Frederic King of Prussia, has merited the title of a great general, it is not only for having successfully opposed armies three times more numerous than his own, but for having been enabled to act offensively in the midst of his ill success.

I cannot avoid mentioning the greatest general who has appeared since that period, the Russian hero whose military skill and energy obliged the Poles, the Turks, and the French to tremble in their turns. The campaigns of this celebrated man, are a model which cannot be too often contemplated. The happy thought of bringing forward the forgotten merits of the hero of Ismail occurred to the English in 1799, and to that nomination the coalition owed its greatest successes.

In vain has Bonaparte, by an uninterrupted series of the most astonishing

victories, destroyed the most numerous and well-disciplined armies, let but a *Suwarrow* be opposed to him, and this adventurer, whom we regard as eminently skilful, but whose merits are due not so much to his own personal abilities, as to the ignorance and presumption of his antagonists, would in a few days see the charm of his good fortune dispelled! May the noble resistance of the brave Spaniards to the Corsican Tyrant, produce a hero like the conqueror of Trebia!

Already has the war in Spain assumed an air of importance which it never displayed before. The legions of the Usurper are again compelled to retreat, and we remark with interest, that their retrograde march is less the effect of the energy of the impetuous Spaniards, than the fruit of wise combination. There is reason to believe, that Bonaparte will see the difficulties of his detestable enterprise in-

crease. Therefore we observe him have recourse rather to fraud than violence; gold steeped in German blood is circulated with profusion throughout the Peninsula. All that craft and perfidy can effect, will be put in force; but may I venture to say, that it will be difficult to avoid this dangerous rock, as long as the command of the combined armies of England and Spain is divided.

These brave nations are called upon to effect the salvation of Europe; to the sentiment of glory by which they are animated, is added a sentiment not less powerful, that of self-preservation!! It is a critical moment! An opportunity presents itself when the most powerful, the last means must be adopted, and among those which the most fatal experience compels to take, there is one which we consider as efficacious.

On board *one* and the same vessel are

the destinies of England and Spain; and in a sea so abundant in rocks and tempests, one hand should govern it.

At the pitch to which things are arrived, it is not troops, it is not talents that are wanting; it is one and the same will; the grand spring of the confederation should be in the hands of *one*. The dictatorship saved Rome; it will save Spain.

At a time when the first duty, the most urgent call is, to arms, every thing should be subservient to the military power, and that power should be centred in *one*. The brave nations whose great characters we may consider as equal, have an equal right to elect a chief of the confederation. Oh! that one of them would, from a patriotic motive, yield the honour of the command, and obey the most worthy of its allies, it would command eternal admiration. The ancients considered their country above every thing. When its safety was concerned, they scrupled not to sacrifice even

their own glory, in order to obtain one of still greater splendour. Is the conqueror of Mantinea less a hero, when he fights in the ranks, than when he immortalizes Thebes and his name at the head of an army? Epaminondas as a soldier, is not less Epaminondas.

If the Spaniards and English are resolved on making a choice, talents will be less requisite in the new dictator, than integrity and the most firm resolution. From so salutary a measure, there will infallibly result a more vigorous impulse, a perfect harmony, a secret with which the enemy has hitherto been but too well acquainted, and which he would from that moment lose the power of applying. This consideration is of the utmost importance. Traitors will easily be discovered, and speedy and exemplary justice will stop the dangerous torrent of corruption in its source.

This primary step having been taken,

we may expect that the grand difficulty is surmounted. The present situation of affairs in Spain, the advantageous position of that country, the extensive means which the English may employ both by sea and land, all these may enable the generalissimo to commence a favourable train of operations. Master of a great portion of the Peninsula, occupying the most important points, and almost the whole coast, he may devise at his pleasure, a certain plan for acting offensively. To this principle must the mind be directed; it is evidently the only one which can give to the confederation the hope of planting its standards on the Pyrenees, and for ever expelling the French from Spain.

The armies of the confederation having thenceforth but one centre of motion, we should soon perceive the war take a turn more and more favourable. The adoption of a new system, requires a change in the organization of the allied forces. I may be mis-

taken, and not discriminate with accuracy; but it seems to me, that the French armies are divided and subdivided in the most simple and uniform manner. From the simple battalion of infantry, to the whole collective mass, the intermediate corps approximate in their relation, and the kind of service is the same.

I have spoken sufficiently on that head in the former part of this work. The communication and correspondence established among all the parts of a great army, through the medium of staff officers, are there equally explained. The manifest advantages which result from it, are not only the effect of the general and uniform organization of the staffs, but also of the excellence of the officers of whom they are composed.

The enemies of Bonaparte lie under the dangerous error, that in order to be a good staff officer, it is essentially necessary to know how to draw a plan, form lines, be a

skilful drawer, &c. In the French army, the staff officer will be enabled to fulfil all the duties required of him, if, to a certain experience in war, he adds intelligence and great activity. Being constantly under the eye of the Commander in Chief, he is always ready to execute his orders.

He will be employed in reconnoitring, at the head of a detachment of cavalry placed under his command, in the direction of a column. He ought to have an accurate knowledge of the topography of the country where the army may be situated, he should be furnished with the most correct maps; be enabled to make a precise report of his daily operations, either verbally or in writing, inform himself of all the changes that a brigade may be liable to in the field, know what all the regiments of each corps are composed of, and their particular strength; he ought to know the theory of the grand

manœuvres, and be skilful in negociating, as occasion may require.

Surrounded by such officers, a general must be very deficient in abilities, if he does not execute well the orders which are issued from the centre of unity, the grand staff. We see also, that such a French general, who perhaps has never been able to raise a perpendicular, nevertheless fulfils the duties which are assigned him, and for effecting which is never in the dark. The reflection is striking; but people are satisfied with making it, and things go on in the same way.

The French armies are provided also with skilful engineers. They form in the corps under the orders of the field marshals, a particular staff, entirely distinct from the grand staff, to which it is subordinate. If it be required to pass a river, or attack an entrenched camp, the field marshal gives his orders to the commander of the engineers, who becomes

responsible for the performance and activity of the officers immediately under his command. The staff officers have no concern in it; however, they are not so deficient in the requisites for an engineer, but that they are able to give an account to the Commander in Chief, of the progress of the operations, and to superintend the execution of them.

Yet they are never observed running about the country, fixing here and there the geometrical compass, nor engaged at the head quarters in rectifying a plan; the rapidity of their movements does not allow them to lose time of so much value, in such useless occupations. The officers of engineers are particularly charged with the inspection of these operations, and they acquit themselves with so much the less trouble, as the army presses forward, and allows them by this means all the time that is necessary. An army which is continually in motion has no entrench-

ments to form. Bonaparte in his German expeditions, was in the habit of leaving a considerable number of his officers of engineers behind, engaged in drawing maps and in fortifying those points which were judged susceptible of it, as well to insure the safety of the convoys, as to protect a retrograde movement.

In Prussia even sieges did not impede the progress of the grand army. There is consequently a great difference between the post of staff officer, and that of an officer of artillery.

This is wisely regulated in the French armies, why should it not be the same in the armies of their opponents?

The composition of the French staff is in my judgment infinitely superior, and this has been sufficiently demonstrated. I shall finish this part with some observations on the personal merits of Bonaparte. They rest on plain truth and well attested facts.

Is this man whom fame, and unfortunately a train of victories hold up to us as a great commander, is this man, though rived at the pinnacle of military power, worthy of the reputation he has acquired? are there incontestable proofs of it? I doubt it.

His activity, his vigilance astonish us, his penetration is unparalleled, and his dexterity formidable. Truly these are paramount qualities, which his overwhelming chain of victories sufficiently evinces. However, I must say that if Bonaparte had not found in the French armies experienced officers and generals; if he had not been at the head of a nation the best organized for rapid warfare, if he had not always had to contend with generals equally cowardly and ignorant, the illusion would soon have vanished. The war in Spain begins to dispel the charm. The Corsican Emperor seems far from having availed himself of the immense means he

had at his disposal. The impartial observer must charge him with having already abused and still abusing them.

This man is governed by a principle which increases in the midst of his victories, and his situation is such that the loss of a great battle, after more than forty victories, would in one day expose the fruit of those immense sacrifices both in men and money. This principle is that of fear; let us not be deceived—this very principle has in some instances assumed an air of boldness, but that is never the case but when he has ascertained the weakness of his enemies. Then is he heard to threaten the universe of his talents and fortune.—If we could have discovered what passed in his breast, when, pressed by the imperial troops on the plains of Marengo, he lost in the middle of the battle both his hopes and his senses, the hero of the age would have exhibited more an object of contempt than admi-

ration. He was observed to experience the most bitter pangs when, at the affair of Aspres his legions were so valiantly repulsed by the Austrian battalions, and their ranks mowed down by the artillery. The mighty king who crossed the Hellespont at the head of a million of slaves to subdue Greece, passed it but a short time afterwards, as a fugitive in a fishing boat; and thus Napoleon the *Great* was seen to seek safety on board a small bark, and trembling, gain with all speed the opposite side of the Danube. His genius, his audacity, all vanished. The man who a few hours before, talked with unparalleled effrontery of his omnipotence, saw in an instant the illusion of his invincibility dissipated. In that awful moment, he might have said to himself—What am I? In a few hours what shall I be? Persons whose veracity cannot be questioned, observed him at the time when this idea

assailed him with all its force. On that visage lately so haughty and insolent, disquietude was forcibly depicted. In vain had we looked for the hero. But fate decreed that the Archduke should remain immovable. The stupidity of the Austrian general gave Napoleon time to recover from his disorder, and seize the opportunity of securing the victory to himself. However, I have no hesitation in asserting that the battle of Aspres was a terrible warning to him; and if the brave Austrian army, for the happiness of Europe and the glory of Francis II. had a commander worthy of heading it, a single campaign would reveal to subdued nations and conquered kings, the secret of his gigantic fortune.

WAR IN SPAIN.

I OBSERVED in the former part of this work that an unprecedented war of twenty years had taught a new art of destruction, and that this fatal science combined with a perfidious policy, had become the most formidable instrument of the miseries into which Europe is plunged; and it is in fact by knowing how to connect intrigue with war, that Bonaparte has attained the summit of power. If in one scale we place the successes due to perfidy, and the immense means of corruption put in force by the Corsican Emperor, and in the other the advantages acquired on the field of battle, the former

would preponderate, and little would remain in which the hero could glory; but as his means of intrigue would be useless, without some success in war, it seems to me, that if we cannot consider the power of Bonaparte as entirely acquired by force of arms, this at least is certain, that it absolutely depends upon it.

The military system of the French armies is therefore the basis on which the colossal edifice of the Corsican empire is fixed. As long as Bonaparte is enabled to apply it, the evil which overwhelms us will only increase. How many distressing events argue in favour of my assertion! The grand object of the nations which resist the arms of the Tyrant is therefore to fight in such a manner as to render the application of this fatal system unavailing. The war in Spain has just resolved this problem; its brave inhabitants, without any other assistance than determined intrepidity, have in their turn de-

vised a new mode of destruction. Their unanimous resistance has deprived the French armies of those means of subsistence which they found elsewhere; they are constrained to subsist on their own magazines. The primary cause of their success is destroyed, their celerity is of no avail. Deprived of the means of making use of it, they have also lost, by Bonaparte's false calculations, the immense advantage of being able to preserve harmony in their movements. Massena advanced with precipitation into Portugal, under the impression that he would be able to overthrow the English army; his attempt has proved abortive. It is not a Mack; it is not an Archduke Charles who opposes him; it is the conqueror of Talavera, the Fabius of Great Britain.

The able defence of Lord Wellington disappoints all the plans of the Usurper; it keeps his principal forces occupied.—The army under Massena weakens by degrees,

through want of provisions, the inclemency of the climate, sieges, &c. The English army preserves its force, and the reinforcements with which it is every day supplied will shortly give it a decided superiority over the French army.

By the attitude of Lord Wellington the war assumes a dangerous turn for the legions of Bonaparte. They fight on the banks of the Tagus; they fight on the banks of the Eber. In vain is Massena invested with the most unlimited powers; his influence cannot extend into Catalonia; the operations in that quarter cannot be combined with his operations in Portugal.

The French army in Catalonia has hitherto been but an army of observation, whose principal object is to prevent any important junction there. The Spaniards are not to expect that the army will become more considerable. If they know their own interest they will convey thither all their disposable force. This diversion,

pressed with vigour, must compel Massena to retreat. By this method alone can they expect to relieve Cadiz; and Lord Wellington being then enabled to give all possible scope to his valour and that of his brave army, the Autumn will not pass before the confederation will reap the fruits of its long and painful labours, by a most decisive victory, and the universal defeat of its enemies.

However worthy of admiration the energy of the Spanish nation may be, we are compelled to acknowledge that the conduct of Lord Wellington alone, preserves at this moment the confederation from a total defection. For more than fifteen months since the termination of the Austrian war, the French have made little or no progress in the Peninsula; the incapacity under which they labour to exert their formidable celerity, and the want of union in their movements, are the capital reasons of their insignificant operations.

Again, if a centre of unity be essential to every system, and every military operation, why do the Spaniards refuse to adopt so salutary a measure? In Catalonia they are superior in number to their enemies, and yet are victorious and defeated alternately! Their progress amounts to nothing. Killing a few men, or seizing a few waggons, does not advance the war; territory must be obtained, places must be taken. But this end will never be accomplished, without a general plan of operations well concerted, and how should the Spanish armies concur in the execution of this general plan, by persisting against every military principle, in acting in a manner independently of each other?

However favourable to any enterprise the adoption of a centre of unity may be, yet the war in the Peninsula has two theatres, too distinct and too remote from each other to be at this moment directed

by one and the same will. A centre of operations is established in Portugal. Circumstances imperiously require that a like centre should be established in Catalonia. It is probably upon the adoption of such a measure that the salvation of Spain depends. Lord Wellington, as we before observed, is at this day the most firm support of the confederation; but if, unfortunately for the common cause, he were not commander in chief of the forces collected in Portugal, Massena would not have permitted his large army to lose time before any strong places; Lisbon would now be occupied by the French.

The establishment of a centre of unity in Spain ought not to produce any change in the present mode of hostility, which consists in harassing the Usurper's troops. The Spanish corps may act in concert without being collected in a mass. This disposition is convenient only to an army so well disciplined and skilful as that of

the English, and only when it is compelled to make a vigorous stand, such as that made by Lord Wellington.

Though the local resources do not permit the armies to subsist in Spain without magazines, the Spaniards have in Catalonia manifest advantages over the French by their vicinity to the sea. This circumstance enables them to act with less circumspection than their enemies. They need not dread the failure of provisions, while the French are exposed to it every moment; the principal object of the Spaniards must therefore be to intercept their convoys; if their different corps act in concert, they may by such means alone oblige the French army to lay down their arms.

Once masters of the country, the Spaniards will find among the inhabitants resources unknown to their enemies. Provisions of every description will be landed without any inconvenience along the

coast, and the inhabitants, in providing themselves, will afford a perpetual source to the troops: they may then introduce great celerity into their operations, the war will become every day more and more fatal to the French armies, whom wise combinations may oblige to concentrate, and starve in the presence of their enemies, who are abundantly supplied.

When in the former part of this work we spoke of the advantages of the military system of Bonaparte, we attributed them to two grand causes—the celerity of the French troops, and the harmony of their movements. The expeditions of the Corsican Emperor into Germany tend to demonstrate the truth of what I have advanced. The slow progress which the French army makes in Spain, confirms it in a manner still more forcible: the troops of the Usurper are harassed by every possible means, and are compelled to subsist upon their magazines. This circum-

stance may suffice to explain the long resistance they experience.

Enraged at the admirable and unexpected defence of the Spaniards, Bonaparte wished to terminate this protracted war by a vigorous blow. A hundred thousand men under the command of an impetuous general, rushed into Portugal. Surely, if Lord Wellington had not displayed the greatest talents to disappoint the designs of Massena by his able defence, the latter would have acquired honour, as well as his master, as possessing an exclusive military genius.

Bonaparte was desirous of a battle in Portugal, as he procured one at Austerlitz, from the presumption and petulance of the Russian generals. For once he was deceived, and the error being exposed shews us the state of his affairs in Spain, in a point of light which by no means justifies his gigantic reputation for glory. For more than fifteen months

since he bought peace with Austria, numerous bodies commanded by his best generals have been employed against the Spaniards; and if to conceal his shame, he has sent a large army even into Portugal, the frontiers of his empire are threatened in the north of Spain. One single victory gained in Catalonia over his troops, may expose all his forces dispersed over the Peninsula, and undeceive Europe with respect to the exaggerated merit of this insolent favourite of fortune.

If, contrary to the hope and desire of every good man, Bonaparte should succeed in his execrable enterprise against the Spaniards, it will be because the latter have not displayed as much prudence as bravery; but at all events the blame of failure would not fall upon the people who execute, but upon the chiefs who direct, on that government in short, whose wisdom and energy may be the means of saving Europe.

From the moment the French troops cease to move with rapidity, and their movements cease to emanate from one centre, what advantages have they over others? They entirely disappear in petty warfare, but they are distinguished and fatal to their enemies in the science of pitched battles.

I could wish to explain, in a clear and intelligible manner, the cause of so fatal a preponderance.

I will examine this important point with attention; with that diffidence which one should always entertain of one's own ideas. I feel myself incapable of giving my judgment on the most interesting part of the war so briefly as I could wish; I will therefore give it by degrees, as I rather choose to be prolix in my explanation, than incur reproach for having given a demonstration too short, and consequently inadequate.

The campaigns of Bonaparte in Italy

are remarkable for the number of the engagements, and the obstinacy with which they were maintained. If the French triumphed in the end, it must be attributed to the bravery of their subaltern generals, fighting on foot at the head of their battalions, and to the faculty they possess of repairing considerable losses in men. Suwarrow drove them from Italy, by obliging the combined Russians and Germans to assume the celerity of the French; he conquered them because he was sole commander of the allied forces, whilst the French, dispersed over the country, served under generals who could not understand each other, because they were incapable of giving to their operations one centre of motion.

Bonaparte escapes from Egypt; and as if it were determined that our age should be remarkable for the most ridiculous and monstrous events, this deserter from the French army, becomes a few months afterwards,

chief of the FRENCH Nation, and in that capacity crosses the Alps, at the head of a FRENCH Army.

It is a notorious fact, that the *invincible Napoleon* was beaten at Marengo in the very beginning of the engagement; the French troops fought with the greatest bravery, but the First Consul seconded the efforts of his army so feebly, that, if it had not been for the superior judgment of a French general, who was posted in the rear, this deserter from Alexandria would have received the most complete defeat, the reward of his cowardice and recent usurpation.

The battle of Marengo, so memorable by the effect it produced, cannot be mentioned to the credit of this modern Attila; indeed he seemed so struck with the inadequacy of his own measures, that he remained during the whole of the next campaign, quietly seated in his consular chair;—the glorious peace of Luneville

was the work of a much braver and more skilful French general. In vain did Bonaparte exclaim in an emphatic and magisterial tone, that the rumour of the victory of Hohenlinden had re-echoed through all Europe; he never could forgive Moreau for his military superiority; and not daring to assassinate him in the midst of his countrymen, he got rid of his hateful presence by transporting him beyond sea.

Petit Napoleon! thus shall history discover, in spite of thee, the hidden springs of thy ferocious and ignominious policy!!

BATTLES.

However Bonaparte assembles his armies on the west of his new empire, and while he makes a shew of invading Great

Britain, the immense camp of Boulogne becomes a school for extensive manœuvres, the application of which he purposes one day to make against the House of Austria. In fact, his numerous legions march through France; the order and harmony which are observed in the march, continue beyond the Rhine; the rapidity of their movements seems to increase beyond the river. A great part of the German Empire is subdued, the eagles of the Corsican are planted at Vienna, and the campaign is not yet remarkable for any battle. By impetuous marches, which no obstacle suspends, the French army rushes into Moravia to defy the Russians. Bonaparte exposes to the hazard of a decisive action both his army and his sceptre; he obtains the most complete victory. The success of the bloody affair at Austerlitz, is a certain proof of the superiority of his tactics; it is to him the presage of future

victories. He is master of the *grand secret.* *

In what does it consist? Is it in the precautions Bonaparte takes on the eve of a battle? Why, every general who understands the art of war, on such an occasion acts with the same caution and the same vigilance. Is it in an order of battle peculiar to the French army, and unknown to its enemies? Since the days of Frederic that essential part of the military art seems not to have required any amendment. If that great warrior adopted an oblique line in preference, it was because he was commonly inferior in numbers. He knew how, according to his strength and the ground, to oppose to his enemies some-

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* This *grand secret* could not long have continued so, but against the German generals; the firmness of the Russians triumphed over it at Eylau. Men must be blind not to recognize a principle of tactics purely elementary.

times a full line, sometimes a line with intervals, varying his dispositions at pleasure, always after this principle, that the best order of battle is that which tends to give to each wing the greatest possible effect. How many generals are there who are incapable of putting into execution this fundamental principle of the military art, and grope in the dark for a field of battle! as if instead of making their arrangements according to the nature of the ground, it were necessary that the ground should be made on purpose to suit the scientific arrangements they have been studying in their voluminous commentaries, excellent in the days of Cyrus or at the siege of Troy. And yet to such generals have the Sovereigns of the Continent entrusted their destiny and their thrones. Leaving the professors of antiquities to reason on the Macedonian Phalanx, and the Roman Cohort, let us never lose sight of the effects of gun-powder; let us study the Turennes,

the Eugenes, the Marlboroughs, the Frederics, who are equal to a long list of generals.

The French for some time imitated the King of Prussia, in not being slaves to prescribed rules. They knew, as he did, how to confine mere science, in order to give a scope to all the vivacity peculiar to their character, to give their faculties all the expansion of which they were capable. One might consequently have expected to see them, in imitation of their model, vary their arrangements as often as the ground required it; but the constant incapacity of their opponents has precluded the necessity, and ultimately obliged them to adopt an invariable plan.—Whatever appearance a French army, ranged in order of battle, may assume to-day, it presents nothing new. It will always exhibit from sixty to eighty thousand men arranged in two lines, and divided into three principal corps, intervals

between each, and a corps of reserve. I will also observe, that the commanders in chief of a great French army have for a principle the making their cavalry act in a body upon one point. Lord Wellington appears to have made this interesting remark; and from the manner in which he baffles the attempts of his adversary, there is reason to believe, the numerous squadrons of Massena will be a greater impediment to his own operations than to those of the allies. This disposition has nothing in it extraordinary, nothing that gives it a decisive advantage. Is it then from the nature of their manœuvres that the French have the advantage over their enemies? But the art of manœuvring troops, is reduced on the day of battle to these principal evolutions, facing about, forming masses, and developing them. And the methods of executing these are the same in all the armies of Europe; it is therefore not to an

arrangement in battle, nor to a superior theory of manœuvres, that the French owe their overwhelming train of victories.

It is, I say again, to their remarkable *celerity* and the *harmony* which prevails in their movements. That is the essential cause of their superiority. I explain.

However advantageous the disposition of an army may be, however favourable the ground that it occupies, it is not by mere hard fighting that the victory will be determined; but at a certain time in the course of the battle, it is necessary to know how to abandon one position, in order to take another, the object of which is to outflank the enemy, or to break his line, the only means whereby the success of a general action can be decided; but the general movement that an army may make on such an important occasion, cannot decide the victory in its favour, if it be not made with rapidity, and executed with great harmony. Now any one

will easily be convinced, that a French army is undoubtedly better capable of executing a movement of this nature than any other.

From the commencement of the firing, its head-quarters are placed at the head of a numerous body of reserve, behind and near the centre of the main body. All the orders proceed from that single point; it is from thence that one and the same impulse is communicated throughout the whole army. The commander in chief is surrounded by a numerous staff, composed of generals and experienced officers, all of whom are well acquainted with the respective positions of the different corps. Does a favourable moment present to execute a general movement, such as what I have described? A sufficient number of officers of the staff receive verbal orders from the commander in chief. They ride with the utmost dispatch through the lines, and instantly transmit the dispositions

of the commander in chief to the lieutenant-generals and field-marshals; they themselves remain at the head of the divisions, to see that their particular movement is conformable to the general movement, and rectify it if necessary. It has been shewn in the course of this work, how well adapted the French staff officers are, by their mode of instruction, for seconding the designs of a commander in chief; it is likewise known, that the divisions and sub-divisions of the French troops are regulated upon the most simple and uniform plan; besides, their generals are perfectly experienced in grand manœuvres: it must thence be obvious, that so many advantages united, must give to the general movement an efficacious celerity, a harmony which must ensure success.

But the rapid movements of a French army, the harmony of their evolutions in a pitched battle, not being considered, but

as advantageous means of acting without ceasing to be the essential cause of its superiority, yet are not the sole cause; and in fact, in order to apply these advantageous means, an opportunity must be found to make a general and decisive movement. Now the French are more expert than their enemies at availing themselves of the favourable opportunity, and profiting by it. That therefore is the primary cause of their superiority *en ligne* that is worthy of examination.

The affair of Marengo, in which the *Grand* Consul appeared and fell in fact so much below his reputation, proves that at that period he had no superiority over his rivals in the art of war; but it taught him an important truth, namely, that it is scarcely ever the first movement that decides the victory, but on the contrary, that it evidently belongs to that general, who, after an obstinate engagement of several hours, has at his disposal a respectable

body of fresh troops. The success of a reserve, is in such case rarely doubtful, and it infallibly produces a decisive success, if that reserve take advantage of the opportunity afforded by any disorder or fluctuation inevitable in the enemy's line, in the course of a general action, to make an impetuous attack, and its victorious attack have been immediately supported by an analogous change in the movements of the army.

With this view, the reserve of the French is usually numerous, and composed of select troops. No sooner is the battle commenced on all points, than this body of reserve, commanded by the commander in chief in person, and posted behind the main body, approaches, as well for the purpose of rendering the battalion impenetrable, as to be ready on any emergency, to assist either of the wings, from both which it is equally distant.

Now, it is proper to remark, that in this disposition the French troops confine them-

selves to keeping up a very brisk fire of artillery and musquetry; no regiment either of infantry or cavalry, ventures to advance beyond the line of battle, for the purpose of breaking through that of the enemy, unless it have received a special order, which never happens but when the enemy after a few hours contest, is by some feint thrown into disorder, and presents an opening at a point incapable of making any resistance; in such case, the impetuous attack of a regiment will decide the victory. Fresh troops advance to its support with the greatest rapidity: all is in motion to take advantage of the disorder occasioned in the enemy's line; the order for advancing being already given. It is a matter of no consequence that in order to break through the enemy's line, a battalion exposes itself to the sacrificing a great number of lives by the cross-firing of the divisions through which it breaks; the danger will be but of short duration, through

the celerity with which the movement is executed, these cross fires must soon cease; for, while a brigade of the French army rushes through the enemy's line, its position is occupied by a great part of the reserve, or by the whole corps of reserve itself, which attacks the enemy in front, and finds them so much employment, that the first corps which has advanced, forms in order of battle, and almost without any difficulty in the enemy's flank or rear, if it has been considered more advantageous. Then it is, that the French troops charge with resolution, and the success is so much the more certain, as they act in good order and with impetuosity against troops which are taken in front and flank, and whose hesitation or tardiness in adopting a measure, such as retreating in good order, or by wheeling round, face the assailants, infallibly occasions great disorder. This disorder will become general, as there can no longer be any regularity in the defence which the

commander in chief of an army thus broken might desire to make, while on the contrary, the utmost unanimity prevails in the attack.

Let us now suppose that after a very brisk firing of several hours, the French line itself has been thus surprised and broken in a weak point by an impetuous charge, made by some one of the enemy's regiments; there still exists between the general head-quarters of a French army, and the different corps of which it is composed, a very frequent and active communication. If the commander in chief have not been able to observe the disorder in his line, he is instantly made acquainted with it by an officer of his staff, and immediately takes measures to remedy it. The reserve is composed of select troops, and from the commencement of the action are ready to charge. The commander in chief detaches the necessary number of men, and entrusts them to the command

of a dashing general. These dispositions are the work of a moment; the detached body of reserve hastens to the point of disorder, which has been indicated, finds the enemy conquerors; but this victorious body, which has scarcely finished its charge, is necessarily thrown into comparative disorder, and being vigorously attacked in flank by the body of reserve, gives way in its turn, and finding no means of safety but in a precipitate flight, the advantage of its first movement is lost. Being most vigorously pursued, it is compelled to throw the first line into confusion, and facilitate to the French troops the means of effecting a passage. Now this is what almost invariably happens: the battle of Austerlitz is an irrefragable proof of what I advance.

After a very destructive fire of artillery and musquetry of some hours, the horse-guards of the Emperor Alexander being impatient, by a daring charge broke

through the French line. They had scarcely finished their victorious career, when some squadrons of Bonaparte's guard, dispatched from the body of reserve by his orders, rushed upon them and completely defeated them. Being warmly pursued, they carried disorder into the Russian ranks; the French, burning to take advantage of an opportunity which it is the object of their tactics either to wait for or provoke, did not suffer that to escape; which I think I have sufficiently explained in the recital which I have made of the fatal battle of Austerlitz.

For the victories of Jena, Ratisbon, and Wagram, they are indebted to the same principles, and the same manœuvres. As I have already mentioned, the French commonly allow the enemy to make the first movement. Now the first movement being nothing but an unconnected attack, instead of being directed as the commencement of a general movement ought to be, what-

ever disorder they may occasion in the line of the French, the latter have, in the immediate employment of their reserve, not only the means of repairing their losses, but will render the victorious but inconsiderate movement of a troop which is not supported, fatal to their enemies.

All the battles gained by Bonaparte in Germany, offer to our view the line either of the Austrians or Prussians broken by the French. A considerable body is constantly separated from those more immediately engaged; hence the prodigious progress made by the French Army—hence the incredible number of prisoners. Now, I would ask, could these perpetual failures have been experienced by the Germans, if their generals had known, as well as the French, how to maintain the most complete uniformity in their movements in order of battle, by establishing, between their head quarters and the different wings of the army, such

a continued and entire correspondence, as that the commander in chief may be informed of what passes throughout the whole extent of the line, a communication of so essential a nature, that without it it is impossible for a commander in chief to make any salutary movement.

If the generals appointed to combat the armies of Bonaparte, were to join to the use of this active correspondence the employment of a body of reserve, and, in imitation of the French, instead of keeping it often too far in the rear, they would place it close to the main body, and oblige it to manœuvre for the purpose of exercising it, and that it may be a check on the enemy by its threatening attitude, they will possess the means which have most powerfully contributed to the military preponderance of Bonaparte.

I repeat it, these are the means which must contribute most effectually to the success of an army. Frederic II. has

lost battles for which he had made the best and most judicious arrangements; the evil arose from the circumstance of his making with his right wing, for example, prodigious efforts to conquer, while he was ignorant of the false direction his left wing was taking, and from not acting conformably to his views, they rendered the attempts of the right wing useless and soon fatal. Now whence did this originate?.... Evidently from a misunderstanding. Frederic was too skilful to have neglected giving to the left wing orders to conform its manœuvres to those of the right, but the order must necessarily have been ill-communicated or misconceived, or affairs having in a short time changed their posture in the left wing without the King of Prussia being apprized of it, his dispositions became of necessity false, and he was beaten.

Therefore, in the communication of orders on a day of battle, too much care

and activity cannot be exercised; and it is an incalculable advantage to a commander in chief to be surrounded by a great number of staff officers always ready to communicate orders, capable of conceiving them well, and, like himself, possessing accurate information of the respective positions of all the corps of the army.

I trust I have clearly explained the cause of those advantages which the French have over their enemies in a pitched battle. I have before observed, that the battle of Austerlitz operated as a presage of future victories, that on that day he was master of the *grand secret*. After what I have asserted, and it cannot be denied that my assertions rest upon innumerable facts, this *grand secret* can only have proved so to the ignorant and inexperienced generals whom the Sovereigns of the Continent have invariably opposed to the Usurper.

What is there in fact more notorious

than that a corps of reserve is employed; and what more simple than the use which the French make of it? They excel by their celerity, and the harmony of their movements in general! You generals, who search in vain for the cause of such an advantage, or who pretend not to perceive it, retrench your baggage; order your subaltern generals to study their manœuvres, to fight at the head of their divisions; your captains of infantry to be on foot at the head of their companies; change the organization and composition of your staff, and you will then be masters of the *grand secret*. Bonaparte, in spite of the torrent of his victories, is not a Frederic, nor an Eugene, nor a Marlborough. These great men had powerful rivals; all their glory is due to their genius and their swords.

Bonaparte, I am constrained to repeat it, owes all his success to the weakness and ignorance of his opponents. I dare

protest that this man would have fallen into a state of nonentity, if he had only met one skilful general, one single brave king. History, while displaying to us the universe conquered by Alexander, stops us for a moment to contemplate a king worthy of the title. Porus has no imitators in our age, and when our descendants shall contemplate the pageantry of the present war, they will see with indignation at the head of the generals with whom the continental nations have thought fit to oppose the Corsican Emperor, the *able Mack* and his worthy competitor the *Archduke Charles.*

RECAPITULATION.

From the title of the work it was perhaps expected, that I should make learned comments on the present war; instead of which, they, whom the constant successes of the Corsican have disposed to indulge in a vain admiration, because they have not examined the causes, any more than they whom the rumour of his victories alarms, will find in my Essay the most impartial judgment that has ever yet been passed on the military means of Bonaparte. To represent him in the eyes of his enemies as deficient in the knowledge of war,

would be a dangerous absurdity; to describe him as a great general would be a scandalous and unpardonable error. On the field of battle he possesses neither the courage nor the aspect of a hero. Though he himself directs the movements of his army, he is pliant enough in changing his situation when it is dangerous. It has not been ascertained whether he can stand fire with a good grace. He seldom speaks to the troops, and he speaks badly; most frequently he is but very imperfectly heard, which still is of great advantage to his short and trivial harangues. However, every one knows the *orator of St. Cloud.*

In vain does he attempt to give a false impression of his *genius and power* by monuments which he multiplies at immense expense. I repeat it, the real source of his unbounded good fortune is in the ignorance of the generals with whom he has had to contend, and in the indolence and weakness of their kings. The

impartial soldier, when he reads this work in which, through a scrupulous attachment to truth, I have fairly described the successes of the Tyrant, will be enabled to deduct from his colossal reputation the advantages which are due to a train of circumstances afforded to this adventurer by fate or by the gods, that he might be the sure instrument of their vengeance, to punish, in an exemplary manner, the Sovereigns of the Continent for their base and crooked policy.

The ridiculous admirers of the Corsican have given him great credit for his campaign in Italy. Not to mention that the commanders in chief of the Imperial armies displayed but little capacity, and their usual inactivity, it would be difficult to form an idea of the number of French whom Bonaparte sacrificed during that war. The reinforcements he received from the Republic were immense. In a word, the battle of Marengo is an incon-

testable and important proof of his incapacity at that time as commander in chief. The result was in his favour, but it is well known that his troops were beaten at all points, and the *Hero of the Day*, who, keeping at a *prudent* distance, saw in their defeat a melancholy presage for his *future glory*, doubtless thought less of furnishing the French with a *Corsican Emperor*, than of preserving the person of the *Grand Consul*. At length, however, the soldiers saw him appear to shout victory, and appropriate to himself the success of a battle, which was exclusively due to the skill and bravery of General Desaix.

If the recent expedition into Egypt had not thrown a lustre on the military merit of the *Hero*, it is clear that the battle of Marengo would have totally eclipsed it. Still he had the good sense to do himself justice; and we see him, as I before observed, during the whole of the following campaign, quietly seated in his new ma-

gisterial chair, leaving to generals more skilful than himself to obtain peace by their conquests.

Possessed of more perfidy than bravery, while the French armies were compelling Austria to sign a treaty most glorious to the Republic, Bonaparte was silently devising means to overturn it, by founding, for himself and his posterity, a most ridiculous empire, and a despotism for France and for Europe most humiliating.

A conspiracy, framed in the gloomy caverns of his vile police, impudently paved for the Corsican the way to the throne. The French remarked with horror, that he would not sit there, till he had steeped his purple in the illustrious blood of the Bourbons!

Master of the consent extorted from the people and the enemy, he cannot conceal from himself the fatal impression he has made on both. The interior of France is disarmed, and new governors assume

the government of the provinces; the armies, though purposely divided while he was acting the odious farce of his new empire, were a source of uneasiness to him; he dismisses a great number of generals and officers, and supplies their places with wretches devoted to himself. Shortly after, on pretence of invading England, the troops are assembled in mass on the coasts; the people and the army expect great events, and......the Tyrant rivets their fetters.

Behold then this deserter from the army in Egypt, master of a vast and formidable empire, with the best and most numerous troops of which France ever boasted, at his disposal. Disciplined and inured to war by the victories of Moreau, Bonaparte made them repeat in the camp what they had performed in the field; he felt for himself and his new military dependants an imperious necessity to study the grand manœuvres which the greater part

of the republican generals understood better than himself.

And after this, let any one wonder at the fortunate rapidity of his invasion beyond the Rhine, in 1805, where, through the incapacity of the Russian and Austrian generals, the French were but once under the necessity of repeating the grand manœuvres of the camp at Boulogne; I speak of the battle of Austerlitz, where the armies of Alexander and Francis united, might, by refusing battle, have reduced to nought *Bonaparte, his army, and his empire.*

I have purposely dwelt with energy on the invasions of the Corsican in Germany. We ought to imitate even our enemies in what may prove advantageous to ourselves. I have extolled the *harmony of the movements* which prevails in a grand French army, merely on account of the simple organization of its staffs, with a view to inspire

those brave men who contend against the Tyrant with a resolution to introduce a salutary change in their system: I have on several occasions laid particular stress upon the *celerity* of the French troops, and does not this stimulate those who are opposed to them to suppress all useless baggage? Does it not argue the necessity there is for increased vigilance and activity against such enemies?

Dare any one maintain that this celerity exclusively belongs to them? Were ever troops more active than those of Frederic the Great? The Austrians who are reproached for their inactivity, have sufficiently evinced under Prince Eugene, and in our days under the command of Suwarrow, that all troops conform to the character of their chiefs, and that the safety and glory of the armies depend solely upon them.

The organization of the French army is one of the principal causes of its supe-

riority; but for that it is not indebted to Bonaparte. It is the joint work of several French generals, among whom I will cite one, General Dumourier.

Bonaparte, by extorting the sceptre, found himself in possession of a powerful military machine, and in which it would be difficult for him to effect any change.

The practice of the commander has necessarily tended to give him some experience in the art of war; but whether through the ignorance of his adversaries he lost the opportunity, or with his usual dexterity he has avoided difficult expeditions, (as for instance a long war with the Russians in 1806, or the present war in Spain) it may be said without partiality that he has never given proofs of great talents. It is true his vigilance and activity may be recorded; but was guilt ever seen to maintain its place without

possessing these two discriminating qualifications? They are so much the more strong in him, because, having openly shewed himself to be the enemy of the human race, there is not one individual who can love him, when he is hated by all, even by his own creatures, who would with joy behold his fall, if they could afterwards enjoy in peace the *money* for which they sold themselves. The principles exercised by Bonaparte towards the nations he has conquered, will mark sooner or later the epoch of his downfal; his power extends, but becomes less solid. Can any one of his allies congratulate himself on being so? Is there a single people collected under his dominion that does not rejoice in secret, amidst its groans, in the hopes of having a new ruler.

The French themselves bite the bit. Germans, Italians, Dutch, all are in expectation; the first disgrace of the Corsican will be the signal for their insurrec-

tion: one battle may reduce his power to atoms; colossal it is true, but more in appearance than reality.

In vain have the continental nations successively bowed their necks to the yoke; Spain gloriously resists; Great Britain stands firm. This formidable confederation shakes the throne of the Usurper; and there is reason to hope will subvert it.

But if ever the Spaniards fall under the repeated efforts of Bonaparte, in vain does he erect monuments to transmit to posterity the remembrance of his robberies; in vain does the mercenary mob of historiographers decorate his baseness with the most brilliant titles, as long as Great Britain has it in her power to hold in her victorious hand the trident of Neptune, and in the other the ægis of her salutary laws, the triumphal arch erected to the vanity of the Corsican, stands upon a slippery basis, the paw of the lion, for

the glory of the English, and the happiness of future generations, is always ready to tear away the veil which covers the shameful and bloody pages of his history!!

ACCOUNT

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION;

WITH

THE CORONATION OF BONAPARTE.

IF the different powers united against the hydra of the French Revolution had seriously thought of opposing and destroying it, Europe would not now be exposed to the murderous stroke of a dominion the most bloody and usurping that ever has existed. The spirit of justice has seldom been the rule of governing powers, and still more rarely the maxim of kings. They who are urged by their situation, interest, and in fact their honour, to in-

terpose their influence in the protection of the most ancient of all monarchies, in the defence of the best as well as the most unfortunate of all sovereigns, from the encroachments of a deluded people, presented themselves sword in hand on his territory, less to prevent an explosion which threatened one day to be so fatal to them, as to appropriate to themselves the spoils of the French nation, and share the immense territory of its kings.

Principles so strange, a conduct so diametrically opposite to what there was reason to expect, roused France to a man. One and the same cry was heard throughout its provinces: *To arms, let us rescue our country.* In a few days France appeared bristling with steel, and presented the commanding spectacle of 1,400,000 volunteers in arms for its preservation and independence.

Corrupt beings, vile wretches, easily

found out the secret to penetrate through the intestine strife of France, and to seize the loosened reins of government. Having done which, it was easy for them to lead astray the opinion of a noble, and till then a loyal people. Lewis, the too mild Lewis, was calumniated, and for having had the weakness to forget that he was a king, made the French forget that he was their father.

The blood of this illustrious and innocent victim ought not to fall upon the nation at large; his murder was the act of a handful of assassins, doomed to hatred and infamy from the first stage of the Revolution. However the French, deceived by the perfidious language of these wretches, fell into the strange error of imagining that there was an understanding between Lewis XVI. and the sovereigns leagued against them. The people, alarmed at the dangers which surrounded

them, no longer reasoned, but only thought of defending themselves.

Some monsters erected an abject republic, by founding it upon the dead bodies of the best men of the nation. A series of victories seemed to consolidate this bloody work. But when a peace with foreign powers had become the reward of the most noble, the most powerful efforts, France was surprised and terrified at finding herself without a government, fatigued with long labours, trembling at the remembrance of the revolutionary axe, of whose ravages deep traces still appear; her inhabitants left to the mercy of the first comer their political, hoping to preserve their individual destiny.

O shame! a stranger, a Corsican presents himself, demands the government, and obtains it. *They expected, if not happiness, at least repose.* Alas! in that fatal moment of indifference, of apathy,

Balaam's ass might have become kings For the misery of that country, and the sorrow of Europe, a Tiger offered. On assuming the supreme command, he proclaimed that the Revolution was at an end, and with it all the evils it had occasioned. He was believed; but the error was of short duration.

I shall not here delineate the actual situation of the French people; I shall forbear to speak of the misery which had been constantly increasing, and content myself with remarking, that it has reached its summit. They feel at this moment the weight of the odious yoke which they have imposed upon themselves, and severely suffer for the false applications they have been obliged to make of *liberty*. It is true its political existence is preserved, but with how many sacrifices has it been purchased? The fortune, liberty, lives of the citizens are at the disposal of the Ty-

rant, and while an army of spies pry even into their minutest actions, while bastiles and horrid dungeons are filled with victims who have been suspected of too ardent a love for their country, sixty thousand young men are annually sacrificed to the ferocious ambition of the Usurper. What, might it be asked, the French, that brave and powerful people, do they remain in willing fetters? Willing! no indeed. What precautions has not the Tyrant taken to disable them from shaking off the yoke? Continual victories have hiterto kept France in continual wonder and expectation. Its armies, marched off to an immense distance from the frontiers, and engaged in warfare, have no time to reflect on the oppressed situation of the interior. The inhabitants are in a great measure disarmed; even the cannons belonging to several cities, formerly used in practising a volunteer artillery, or the

celebration of a festival, are, by the direction of the Corsican, removed, so much confidence does he place in what he is pleased to call *the great nation.* His military successes have furnished him with the means of reigning in safety. The chief places are occupied by men who are corrupted, who may be supposed willing to do every thing for him, as he has done every thing for them. In a word, the existence of a population of 25,000,000 of souls is in the hands of a horde of villains; so that the circumstances are of such a nature, and the fetters with which France is bound so strongly wrought, that in her distress she is compelled to wish for the defeat of her armies, as the only means of shaking off the oppression under which she labours.

The hatred which the mass of the nation entertains towards him, is not less strong, or less just, than in any other

country, and it is certain that if an occasion offered, it would be more efficacious. A single failure in the armies of the Tyrant may hasten this salutary moment. We trust it is not far distant.

PROOFS

OF THE

ATTACHMENT OF THE FRENCH

TO THE

CORSICAN EMPEROR.

To form an idea of the sentiments which the Corsican Emperor inspires, it is only necessary to remark the effect which is produced on the public by his appearance. Let an observer wait on the terrace of the Thuilleries for his return from St. Cloud to Paris, he will see all that assemblage of carriages, footmen, and guards pass with great pomp along the shores of the Seine, cross the Champs Eliseés, and return to the palace, without producing any other sensation than the appearance of a stage coach, no person thinks of crying out

vivat, nor does any one deign to honour him with a bow.

Here is sufficient to confound the fulsome journalists—those everlasting trumpeters of the *affection of the people for the restorer of humanity.*

This information is irrelevant to my subject; but besides that I seize with pleasure this opportunity of paying my private tribute of *love and praise to Napoleon the Great*, my readers will perhaps not be offended at my attempt to form their opinion with respect to this adventurer, whom they have the assurance to represent to us in a thousand and one papers as a *Monarch adored by his subjects.*

To confute these ridiculous assertions, circulated in abundance, and not without design, I will indulge myself in lifting up a corner of the veil which served to conceal the tragi-comedy of the Usurper's Coronation.

All the journals of the day, all the publications of the time on that strange farce, represented the army and the French people as unanimously decreeing the imperial crown to the *First Consul.* In fact, a multitude of addresses were presented by the armies and provinces to the new *Emperor*, to congratulate him on his *happy* accession to the throne. But people are strangely deceived, if they imagine that these monuments of the most vile, the most abominable adulation, were composed and signed by any but prefects and colonels. Some regiments, though isolated, had the courage to protest against the famous decree of the senate, and in consequence thereof were sent to America. A great number of officers and generals were disgraced at that time, for having refused to consent to the slavery and degradation of their country.

Among the congratulations which some prefects not devoted to Buonaparte, but

compelled through fear of the scaffold, sent to the senate, one in particular deserves to be recorded, which is as follows, expressive of satisfaction at the escape of the Corsican from the dangers of a *conspiracy*. Moreau had just before been arrested and brought to trial.

The prefect speaks in the name of his province:—

" We have shuddered at the recital of
" the scenes which the capital has lately
" witnessed. It is a public calamity,
" which has excited consternation in the
" minds of every individual. But this
" crisis, far from diminishing the zeal of
" true patriots will only redouble their
" devotedness to the public cause. Pro-
" vidence will never permit him who has
" always acted humanely and generously
" towards his enemies, to fall under their
" strokes."

Bonaparte felt the ambiguity. The prefect was dismissed.

When the army and the people had consented with indifference to the usurpation, the French youth signalized themselves unanimously against it. Great pains have been taken to conceal this circumstance; it is proper it should be made known. The Politechnical School, containing near three hundred young men from the age of 16 to 20, was called upon as being a distinguished military body, to unite their vows with those of the army. These brave youths assembled, and in the presence of their professors, who had been charged some time before to instruct them, unanimously and in the most pointed manner refused their consent to the nomination of the *Corsican* to the empire. None of them tarnished the glory acquired by so noble a resolution. *His Majesty* was almost suffocated with rage, and in his first emotion ordered the school to be suppressed. But it is a seminary of excellent officers of the engineers

and artillery; necessity obliged him to change his intention—the school was continued.

At the time this scene took place, immediately under the eye of the *Corsican*, the Artillery Academy established at Metz, with equal courage protested against his usurpation. This school is composed of three hundred young men having the rank of officers, and who are sent to fill the vacancies which happen in the army. This unexpected refusal was far from appeasing the recent transports of Bonaparte. He had no means of glutting his vengeance; and not being able to suppress institutions which are essential to the army, he founded the Military School at Fontainbleau; and, to acquire its confidence, lavished on the young members the ranks of officers. Governors are appointed to form the opinions of the youthful candidates, and he who makes a parade of attachment to the Corsican, though com-

pletely ignorant, is always preferred to the intelligent candidate, whose opinion is not yet mature.

In all the French provinces, as well as in the metropolis, the coronation of his *Corsican Majesty* was an inexhaustible subject for jeers, sarcasms, and imprecations. Useless demonstrations! no doubt, but which serve to shew the *affection of the French for their new Master*.

Some vile mercenaries celebrated this odious and ridiculous ceremony, by publications which breathed the most disgusting flattery: the new Emperor could not boast of having inspired one single verse that deserves to be recorded. However, a paltry ode, entitled "La Napoleide," was circulated in Paris. It was necessary that so *great an event* should be solemnized at any rate. The ode obtained publicity, and appeared in the provinces. A young man of twenty, indignant on reading it, immediately answered it by an ode,

entitled "The Anti-Napoleon." It was forwarded to Paris and circulated every where with incredible rapidity, and reached the ears of the Tyrant. The following are a few stanzas :—

Que le vulgaire s'humilie
Sur le parvis doré du palais de Sylla ;
Au devant du char de Julie,
De Claude et de Caligula,
Ils régnèrent en dieux sur la foule tremblante,
Leur domination sanglante
Accabla le monde avili ;
Mais la postérité déteste leur mémoire,
Et ce n'est qu'en léguant des forfaits à l'histoire,
Qu'ils sont échappés à l'oubli.

En vain la foule mercenaire
D'un culte adulateur enivre tes esprits.
Mon âme plus libre et plus fière,
Ne respire pour toi que haine, que mépris.
On ne me verra point mandier l'esclavage,